

**MINNESOTA  
2010-2014  
FINAL ANNUAL PROGRESS AND SERVICE  
REPORT  
AND  
CAPTA UPDATE**

**Submitted June 30, 2014**



Minnesota Department of **Human Services**

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# MINNESOTA ANNUAL PROGRESS AND SERVICES REPORT FOR FFY 2014

## VISION STATEMENT

*Children in Minnesota will be safe from abuse and neglect  
and nurtured in healthy and stable families.*

To realize the above vision, the Minnesota Department of Human Services' (the department) policies, practices, activities, and allocation of resources will be directed toward achieving a child welfare system in which:

1. Communities are engaged with child protection agencies as partners to protect children and support families
2. Families are engaged with child protection agencies and communities as partners in addressing safety concerns
3. Children and families have access to a continuum of responses and services that are tailored to meet their unique needs
4. Children and families receive services necessary to address child safety and family stability
5. Children and families receive fair and respectful treatment; and experience equitable outcomes regardless of race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status or where they live
6. Children are safely maintained in their families and communities with meaningful connections, culture, and relationships preserved and established
7. Minnesota's public child welfare staff is a diverse, professionally competent team that supports strength-based practice and demonstrates inclusiveness at all levels.

The department's vision is guided by the following values and principles of Minnesota's Child Welfare Practice Model:

**Safety:** Child safety is paramount and best achieved by supporting parents within their community.

**Permanency:** Children and youth need and have the right to lifelong nurturing and secure relationships that are provided by a family who can meet their specific needs. Efforts to identify and secure permanency for children are continuous and integrated into all stages of involvement with a child and family.

**Fostering Connections:** As youth transition to adulthood they benefit from services that promote healthy development, academic success, safe housing, and established connections to caring adults who commit to a lasting supportive relationship.

**Well-being:** Children's well-being is dependent upon strong families and communities to meet

their physical, social and emotional health, as well as educational and cultural needs.

**Family Focus:** Families are the primary providers for children's needs. The safety and well-being of children is dependent upon the safety and well-being of all family members.

**Partnership:** Families, communities, and the public child welfare system are primary and essential partners in creating and supporting meaningful connections in a safe and nurturing environment for children and youth.

**Respectful Engagement:** Children, youth, and families are best served when public child welfare staff actively listen to them and invite participation in decision making. Respectful engagement includes understanding and honoring a family's history, culture, and traditions, empowering families to meet their unique and individual needs through utilization of family strengths, and educating families regarding the child welfare process.

**Organizational Competence:** Minnesota's public child welfare agencies perform as high quality organizations, guided by a clear mission, priorities and resource allocation with committed, qualified, trained, and skilled staff and providers applying evidence-informed practices.

**Professional Competence:** The professional competence of Minnesota's public child welfare system will be demonstrated by a workforce that proactively responds to the evolving needs of communities, is knowledgeable of the historical context within which the child welfare system operates, provides respectful treatment to families, and continually strives for professional excellence through critical self-examination.

**Cultural Competence:** Cultural competence is achieved through understanding and serving children, youth, and families within a context of each unique family and community. This includes, but is not limited to, a family's beliefs, values, race, ethnicity, history, tribe, culture, religion and language.

**Accountability:** The public child welfare system holds itself accountable to the highest standards of practice. It recognizes its responsibility to children, youth, families and other stakeholders to assess and manage its performance, self-correct, innovate, and enhance its ability to achieve positive outcomes through continuous improvement efforts. The system stakeholders also recognize the need for practices, service delivery and performance to be easily understood, evaluated, and open to feedback from stakeholders.

## GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND MEASURES OF PROGRESS

The department has undertaken a number of assessment activities to gather, analyze and synthesize information to identify resources, strengths and areas needing improvement. Assessment activities included:

- Assessment of progress on the goals and objectives of the 2010 – 2014 Child and Family Services Plan

- The statewide assessment completed in 2007 for the CFSR
- Findings from the 2007 federal Child and Family Service Review
- Findings from Minnesota's Child and Family Service Reviews conducted from 2010 through 2014
- Recommendations from the African American Disparities Committee
- Department research and evaluation of data on federal and state performance indicators
- Independent evaluations of child welfare reform efforts, including:
  - Family Assessment Response
  - Parent Support Outreach Program final report
  - Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) Family Connections interim report.
- A number of other sources of evaluation and feedback such as Child Mortality Review and Citizen Review Panel reports
- Training system assessment.

The goals and objectives reported in Attachment A describe activities to improve safety, permanency and well-being outcomes for children, youth and families, in addition to improving systemic functions that support child welfare practice and service delivery. Elements of the state's Program Improvement Plan have been incorporated into the goals and objectives.

Successful implementation of goals and objectives are measured by:

- Improved timeliness to initiate investigations
- Increased monthly caseworker visits with children in out-of-home placement
- Reduced out-of-home placements
- Reduced re-entry into foster care
- Reduced recidivism
- Reduced number of children aging out of foster care without achieving permanency
- Improved rate of relative care
- Improved stability in foster care
- Reduced racial and ethnic disparities and disproportionality.

Accomplishments toward meeting interim benchmarks for each objective are assessed and reported annually. Findings from the state's child welfare quality assurance reviews and performance on national performance standards (composites and individual measures) are used to measure improved outcomes for children, youth and/or their families throughout the course of the plan.

Overarching strategies to accomplish improvements fall into five broad categories reflected throughout the safety, permanency, well-being, and systemic improvement activities detailed in the plan, including:

- Engage families in case planning and encourage an active role in the care of their children
- Clarify existing policy and practice requirements, establish acceptable performance standards, and develop best practice guidance to improve front-line case practice
- Continue to identify populations at greatest risk and target services to those populations.

- Support a continuum of responses to reports of maltreatment, new strategies to keep families intact, and placement and permanency alternatives, including post-permanency services to meet the individual needs of children and families
- Implement state and local strategies to address disparities based on race, and build local capacity for addressing cultural diversity
- Build child welfare system capacity, and involve communities and cultures in meeting the needs of children and families.

Other strategies represent the state's experience extending and/or sustaining strategies implemented during the two-year Program Improvement Plan cycle in 2010 and 2011.

Minnesota has a continuum of public and private services for children and families. This service continuum includes: child abuse and neglect prevention, intervention and treatment services and foster care; family support services; family preservation services; and services to support family reunification, adoption, kinship care, independent living, or other permanency living arrangements as outlined in the final rule. [45 CFR 1357.15 (n)]

The following is a description and definition of the continuum of services provided by the state and county agencies:

1. **Family Support and Time-limited Family Reunification.** Services include: Information and referral, community education and prevention, health-related, housing, social and recreational, home-based support, homemaking, individual counseling, respite care, group counseling, Family Group Decision Making, pilot projects, local collaboratives, adaptive aids, supplies or special equipment, adolescent life skills training, specialized case management, Community Alternative Care (CAC), Community Alternatives for Disabled Individuals (CADI) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) waivers.
2. **Protective Services.** These include: Child protection assessment and investigation, consisting of all activities from receiving initial reports of maltreatment to determining whether maltreatment occurred. This involves determining whether child protection services are needed or Family Assessment Response, which consists of all activities from initial reports of maltreatment to assessing immediate safety concerns, completing risk assessments and developing a service plan, if indicated.
3. **Family Preservation.** Services include: Child welfare assessment; court-related services; family-based crisis services, counseling services, and life management skills; family services for Family Assessment Response program; Family Group Decision Making; Parent Support Outreach Program; respite care; general case management; children's mental health; family and community support services; case management (Rule 79); child general case management; children's mental health family-based services and therapeutic support of foster care.
4. **Adoption Promotion and Support Services.** Services include: MN ADOPT, a coordinated system to provide the State Adoption Exchange and adoption information, referral and training for adoption professionals, adoptive families and persons interested

in adoption. In addition, the state provides more intensive, therapeutic services for adopted children and their families through the Public/Private Adoption Initiative (PPAI), the state's grant contracts with eight private, nonprofit adoption agencies.

5. **Foster Care Maintenance.** Services include: Child foster care, treatment foster care, group homes, correctional facilities, child shelters and child residential treatment.
6. **Adoption Subsidy Payments.** This category includes: The Title IV-E Adoption Assistance Program.
7. **Guardianship Assistance Payment.** This category includes: Payments for Relative Custody Assistance, a state-funded program.
8. **Independent Living.** Services include: Those provided under the Support for Emancipation and Living Functionally or Chafee Foster Care Independence Program, and homeless and runaway youth services.
9. **Foster Parent Training and Recruitment.** Services include: All activities of county human service agencies, and the department's recruitment grantees.
10. **Adoptive Parent Training and Recruitment.** Services include: The Public/Private Adoption Initiative service grants, and adoption services provided by county agencies.

Much of the service coordination essential to clients takes place at the county level through cooperative working relationships with community-based service providers, multi-disciplinary team models of service delivery and case management services. Service coordination is supported by the department through strategic support functions such as training, information and technology systems, quality assurance and policy development.

A description of the specific goals and objectives, benchmarks and progress are in **Attachment A – FFY 2015 APSR Goals and Objectives.**

## **SERVICES FOR CHILDREN UNDER AGE 5**

The department is providing policy guidance for referral of children under age 3 when involved in a substantiated case of maltreatment, as described in Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act for Infant and Toddler Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education. The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act requires all children under age 3 who are determined victims of child maltreatment to be referred for services. Minnesota includes each child under age 3 who is involved with a substantiated report to have an Infant and Toddler Intervention referral.

The Social Service Information System (SSIS) identifies cases in which the referral is mandated, and cases where it is recommended. Workers document that an Infant and Toddler Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education referral is or is not made.

**Targeted services provided to these children to reduce the length of time that children under age 5 are in foster care without a permanent family:**

The Minnesota Children's Justice Act Task Force has convened a "Babies Can't Wait" Task Force subcommittee. This subcommittee focuses on improvements that can be made for children in foster care for ages birth-5. Tasks for improvement include: Providing training on health and development for young children to those working in the court system, creating bench cards for judges, and providing information on relevant assessments and services for this population. A survey was conducted to identify appropriate county contacts, which will be used to disseminate information. The Minnesota Children's Justice Act Task Force created "The Babies Can't Wait Courtroom Checklist," A tool with questions that address well-being of children in the child welfare system

**Activities that provide developmentally appropriate services to children under age five:**

Minnesota's statewide infrastructure is supported by creating a common agenda, mutually reinforcing activities and shared measurements.

**Building Power for Babies: Developing a Prenatal to 3 Plan for Minnesota**

The governor's Children's Cabinet has appointed the Minnesota Department of Health to lead a strategy for improving the health and well-being of children during their first three years of life. The plan will include prenatal care and focus on creating a healthy start for all Minnesota children. The plan strives to eliminate health disparities based on race, ethnicity and geography. The "Building Power for Babies: Developing a Prenatal to Three Plan for Minnesota," "Prenatal to Three Framework" and "The Earliest Opportunities Matter" will be a roadmap for future action by the Children's Cabinet, state agencies, the Early Learning Council and other stakeholders.

**Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS):** In 2013, the Minnesota Department of Health was awarded an Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) grant. The purpose of the grant program is to improve physical, social and emotional health during infancy and early childhood. The goal is to eliminate disparities, and increase access to needed early childhood services by engaging in systems development, integrating activities, and utilizing a collective impact approach to strengthen communities for families and young children. The goal is to improve the quality and availability of early childhood services at both the state and local levels. Children's Trust Fund staff continues its commitment to work with the Minnesota Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems in the strategic planning, coordination and implementation process. Specifically, Minnesota's ECCS will work to promote healthy development. This will be accomplished by promoting early detection and intervention through the following activities:

- Expanding screening and referral in health care and child care
- Support Race to the Top online screening initiative
- Coordinate training on development, screening and referral.

**Coordinating activities across sectors by:**

- Exploring a centralized access point for existing services
- Exploring data systems to communicate across sectors.

#### Minnesota Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting program

Child Safety and Permanency Division staff are working with the Minnesota Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting program to enhance, expand, and sustain evidence-based home visiting programming to better serve Minnesota's most vulnerable children.

#### A Call to Action on Behalf of Maltreated Infants and Toddlers

An assessment tool created by the American Humane Association, Center for the Study of Social Policy, Child Welfare League of America, Children's Defense Fund and ZERO TO THREE. The document provides a development framework for child welfare policymakers and administrators to assess the socio-emotional and behavioral well-being of infants and young children, their families and communities.

#### Survey of State Child Welfare Agency Initiatives for Maltreated Infants and Toddlers

##### ZERO TO THREE and Child Trends

The Child Safety and Permanency Division conducted a survey of child welfare agencies nationally that solicited approaches to addressing the needs of very young children in the child welfare system. This survey was offered to all 50 state child welfare agencies to gather information about policies and practices that address the needs of maltreated infants and toddlers. ZERO TO THREE and Child Trends staff hope that through this survey they will identify policy innovations and highlight key challenges, gaps and common barriers that agencies across the nation face in meeting the needs of very young children who experienced maltreatment.

#### ZERO TO THREE Technical Assistance Grant

##### ZERO TO THREE Technical Assistance to States on Moving an Infant-Toddler Policy

##### Agenda

Child Safety and Permanency Division staff helped craft a multi-state agency application for technical assistance from ZERO TO THREE (ZTT). Minnesota was selected to receive training in "States Moving an Infant-Toddler Policy Agenda." The technical assistance opportunity is supported by the Birth to 5 Policy Alliance, and the Ounce of Prevention Fund. The purpose of the technical assistance is to help states refine and move forward an infant-toddler policy agenda. Minnesota was selected as one of five states to participate in developing a set of strategies that include policy priorities, such as changing laws or regulations, and implementing priorities that ensure existing policies are being implemented consistently and correctly.

#### Statewide Networking – Linking Child Welfare and Early Care and Education

Child Safety and Permanency Division staff are committed to work in partnership with other state and community-based agencies to improve access to and develop high quality early care and education services for young children in Minnesota's child welfare system.

#### Child Welfare – Early Childhood Collaboration

The intent of this collaborative is to improve the socio-emotional and behavioral well-being of infants and young children ages birth to 5 and their families who are in or at risk of entering foster care. This is done by maximizing identification, enrollment and attendance of these children into comprehensive high-quality early care and education services through collaborative service delivery. The Child Welfare – Early Childhood Collaborative (CW-EC) meets to

coordinate collaborative service delivery, and to develop policy recommendations to systematically improve the optimal development of children and families within child welfare practice.

#### African American Babies Coalition

Child Safety and Permanency Division staff are partners in a pilot project on brain development with the Early Childhood Training and Resource Center, the Minnesota Community Foundation, University of Minnesota Early Childhood Center, community-based family support staff and parents and daycare providers. The project goal is to promote evidence-based knowledge regarding brain development and child abuse and neglect prevention. The target audience is frontline staff and community residents in African American communities. With community guidance, the Wilder Research Center used focus groups to collect baseline information on practices and beliefs about parenting in African American communities. Information collected will be the basis for planning and community discussions on how to adapt and promote best practices, and the latest research within African American communities. Concurrently, members of the African American Coalition are working with Frameworks Institute to craft a core story that will help change public dialogue about the importance of brain research in raising healthy children.

#### The Birth Parent National Network

Child Safety and Permanency Division staff participates in the Birth Parent National Network meeting, convened by the National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds in partnership with Casey Family Programs. Participants will plan for development of a network of birth parents to ensure a national voice for parents regarding policies and practices affecting children and families who have experience with child welfare.

#### Minnesota Café Model

The Minnesota Café Model is a collaborative effort among Child Safety and Permanency Division, Children's Development Services, Prevent Child Abuse Minnesota, and Minnesota Child Care Resource & Referral. The Minnesota Café Model Advisory Team has contracted with ZERO TO THREE (ZTT) to develop a Café Model that incorporates parent and provider dialogs from ZTT's "Sharing the Care" curriculum and Illinois' "Strengthening Families Love is not Enough" Parent Café Model. ZTT worked with Minnesota's Parent Leaders to craft an experiential training that prepares participants to bring the Minnesota Café process to their own communities. Regional implementation and training of the Minnesota Café Model began in spring 2014.

#### Trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences

Child Safety and Permanency Division staff worked with partners to align, develop and promote statewide trainings that emphasize developmental neurobiology; the Adverse Childhood Experience study; trauma-informed, resilience research; and the socio-ecologic framework oriented around a strengthening families/protective factors framework. Division staff and partners are in the process of developing a strategic plan to roll out statewide.

Parent Support Outreach Program/Parent Support Outreach Program-American Indian Families  
The Parent Support Outreach Program/Parent Support Outreach Program-American Indian

families (PSOP/PSOP-AI) is intended to fill the service gap between families who are able to seek assistance on their own and those mandated into the child protection system. PSOP/PSOP-AI pre-emptively engages at-risk families with young children screened out from receiving a child protection assessment or investigation. PSOP is a voluntary, consumer-driven family support service emphasizing respect, engagement, partnership with families, and recognition of strengths and needs.

#### Part C and SSIS Enhancement

During FFY 2014, Children's Trust Fund staff will lead a team of cross disciplinary staff that will include the state Part C and Help Me Grow coordinators. The team will develop training regarding the intersect between child welfare and early childhood. The Part C SSIS enhancement will be a new screen in SSIS that is completed by child protection staff working with children ages 3 and under involved in a substantiated case of maltreatment. Training, a bulletin and technical assistance will be developed to help child protection workers complete referrals for these children in SSIS.

#### Minnesota Infant and Toddler Early Intervention Referral

According to Minn. Stat., Section 626.556, subd.10n, Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors, referral to early intervention services requires that a child under age 3 who is involved in a substantiated case of maltreatment shall be referred for screening under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Part C. Parents must be informed that the evaluation and acceptance of services are voluntary. The commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Human Services shall monitor referral rates by county, and annually report the information to the legislature beginning March 15, 2014. Refusal to have a child screened is not a basis for a Child in Need of Protection or Services petition under Chapter 260C.

The first Infant and Toddler Intervention installation in the Social Service Information System was completed on Sept. 3 and 4, 2013. A statewide training was conducted by the Minnesota Child Welfare Training System regarding the Infant and Toddler Intervention and Referral on Sept. 30, 2013.

The referral rate by county covers the period Sept. 1, 2013, through Dec. 31, 2013. The statewide aggregate number of infants and toddlers referred for early intervention screening during this period was 246 children under age 3.

#### Help Me Grow National Affiliate

The Minnesota Departments of Health, Education and Human Services are committed to contract with National Help Me Grow (HMG) to explore becoming an affiliate. Help Me Grow is a system that connects at-risk children with the services they need. HMG assists states in identifying at-risk children, and helps families find community-based programs and services. HMG is a system that builds collaboration across sectors, including child health care, healthy care and education and family support. Through comprehensive physician and community outreach and centralized information and referral centers, families are linked with needed programs and services. Ongoing data collection and analysis helps identify gaps in barriers to the system. HMG provides technical assistance in building, sustaining, and continuous improvement of Help Me Grow systems, and is a recognized leader in the promotion of optimal child

development. The Help Me Grow system is specifically designed to help states organize and leverage resources to best serve families with children at-risk. Use of the HMG system has been shown to improve access to services and encourage collaboration across sectors, while simultaneously lowering costs. HMG will ensure:

- Easy access to a statewide system that supports families in learning about their children's developmental needs and connects them to appropriate services
- Development of comprehensive systems of child health care, early care and education, and ensure that human service providers have the knowledge, skills and resources to identify children at risk
- Public officials and other key stakeholders understand the gaps in available supports and services.

#### Minnesota's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant

Minnesota received a federal Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant of \$45 million for 2012-2015 to support a plan to improve results for children, and build capacity and accountability into Minnesota's early learning system. The grant supports implementation of the state's plan for early learning reform, including:

- Improving early childhood program quality and accountability
- Building a skilled early childhood workforce
- Improving access to quality early childhood programs for children with high needs
- Aligning state infrastructures around goals.

Together, elements of the plan will establish critical state infrastructure that benefits from improved inter-departmental coordination at the state level, effective data systems, accessible resources for families, and training and development opportunities for providers. The Community Based Child Abuse Prevention, Strengthening Families approach and the Protective Factors framework, as well as the Minnesota Café Model for parent engagement, were components of the grant application.

#### Online Screening

The Children's Trust Fund is a member of the Interagency Developmental Screening Task Force, a group that meets to review and recommend developmental and social-emotional screening instruments for publicly funded programs that screen young children in Minnesota.

## COLLABORATION

Continuous and ongoing coordination with a broad representation of internal and external stakeholders continues to represent the spectrum of the statewide child and family service delivery system.

Substantial, meaningful and ongoing collaboration with the Child and Teen Check-up staff, Social Service Information System, Children's Research and Reporting staff, Citizen Review Panels, Minnesota Fathers and Families Network, and courts through the Children's Justice Initiative (CJI) is included in **Attachment A – 2015 APSR Goals and Objectives**. Other stakeholders listed below are consulted on an ongoing basis and critical to program development

work.

The following representatives are part of statewide ongoing planning and coordination:

- Administration of Children and Families (federal)
- Citizen Review Panels
- Child Mortality Review Panel
- Metro county human services supervisors
- Regional supervisor groups
- Minnesota Association of County Social Services Administrators, Children's Committee
- Indian Child Welfare Act Advisory Committee
- Children's Trust Fund
- County child welfare staff and administration
- Tribal representatives
- University of Minnesota
- Minnesota State Colleges and University System
- Children's Justice Initiative
- State ombudspersons for families (Latino, African American, American Indian, Asian, et. al.)
- Community service providers
- Former foster youth
- Juvenile corrections
- Minnesota Fathers and Families Network
- Minnesota Foster Parent Association
- Social Service Information System (DHS)
- Partnerships for Child Development (DHS)
- Licensing (DHS)
- Children's Research and Reporting (DHS)
- Transition to Economic Stability staff (DHS)
- Health care policy (DHS)
- Child and Teen Check-up staff (DHS)
- African American Disparities Committee
- Parent Leaders for Child Safety and Permanency.

### **Collaboration with the Court System**

The department's collaboration with the state court system is the Children's Justice Initiative (CJI). The CJI Advisory Committee, which meets quarterly, is co-chaired by the commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Human Services and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. Advisory committee members include the Child Safety and Permanency Division director and the assistant commissioner of the Children and Family Services Administration in the Minnesota Department of Human Services. The CJI Advisory Committee sets priorities and directs activities throughout the year. Priority areas include: Implement data sharing between social services and courts to improve analysis of child outcome data; improved kinship-relative engagement and placement; meeting needs of

older youth in care and in transition, including those in 18-21 extended foster care; improved educational and health planning for children and youth in foster care; and collaboration with Minnesota tribes. Every two years, the CJI convenes regional trainings throughout the state for local CJI teams. These trainings generally include more than 1000 participants and cover best practices in child welfare and the courts to address priority areas. Every two years, alternating between the years when regional trainings are held, a fall conference takes place that brings together CJI teams in a central location. The agenda includes presentations on evidence-based and emerging practices.

## **PROGRAM SUPPORT**

The Child Safety and Permanency Division's (CSP) Training Unit provides child welfare policy and SSIS training; all are designed to support the goals and objectives of the plan and achieving safety, permanency and well-being for all children served through the child welfare system. Training is competency-based, culturally responsive, family-centered and job-related. Training is provided to county and tribal child welfare staff, resource family providers (adoption, foster care and kinship care), and private agency staff and providers.

### **Title IV-E Training Time Studies**

#### **Local Collaborative Time Study (LCTS)**

Training costs in the LCTS cost pool include salaries and fringe benefits for collaborative staff and costs related to supplies, equipment and other expenses that are fully attributable to time study participants. The cost pool expenditures are allocated to Title IV-E training activities based on the LCTS time study allocation process.

#### **Social Service Administrative Tribal Time Study (SSATTS)**

Training costs in the SSATTS cost pool include salaries and fringe benefits for tribal child welfare staff and costs related to supplies, equipment and other expenses that are fully attributable to time study participants. The cost pool expenditures are allocated to Title IV-E training activities based on the SSATTS time study allocation process.

#### **Social Service Information System**

Training costs include salaries and fringe benefits for state and contracted staff that develop training materials and provide training. Also included are other related costs such as postage, travel, rent, video conferencing, equipment and other training supplies.

#### **Placing Agency Time Study (PATs)**

Training costs include the portion of the administrative per diem charged by private child placing agencies that is allocated to training activities, based on the PATs time study allocation process. These expenditures are related to child-specific placement claims.

### **Title IV-E Tribal Training Plans (Tribes with Title IV-E Agreements)**

Training costs include salaries and fringe benefits for tribal child welfare trainers and consultants who develop training materials and provide training, and the postage, travel, rent, video

conferencing, equipment and other training supplies to conduct trainings. Also included are costs for conference registration, travel and per diem expenditures (mileage, lodging and meals) for tribal staff that attend Title IV-E approved child welfare training offered by the department's Child Safety and Permanency Division, or other Title IV-E approved child welfare training listed in the annual training plans.

## **Title IV-E Scholars Program**

University and local training costs: The department provides Title IV-E eligible educational activities through undergraduate and graduate programs at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities and Duluth, and a consortium of five state universities. The primary goal of these educational activities is to build culturally competent professionals who represent the diverse populations served by social service agencies.

University of Minnesota educational costs include expenditures identified in the Title IV-E Child Welfare Training grant contract between the University of Minnesota, Office of Sponsored Projects Administration, and the department. Expenditures may include costs for salaries and fringe benefits for university staff, consultants and advisors develop training materials and provide educational instruction. Also included are stipends, per diem, venue costs, advertisements, photocopying, conference registration and instructional supplies and materials.

County training costs include salaries, fringe benefits, stipends, travel, per diem, tuition, books, and educational supplies for long-term training for full-time county staff obtaining a master's degree in Social Work (MSW).

## **Training Expanded Audiences**

A needs assessment was conducted to measure how requirements of the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act legislation will impact the training system. The department assessed the potential number of new training participants included under the act, the types of trainings that these groups may require, and the capacity of the current training system to absorb these groups. The department will continue to assess the suitability of including other trainee groups under the act, but is not currently expanding training in this area. The assessment included identifying the cost of training and allocation of resources. The department collaborated with the Guardian ad Litem (GAL) program to determine which courses offered by the Training Unit the GAL program was interested in utilizing. The two curricula identified were CSP209A: ICWA and CSP307B: The African-American Experience. Materials on these two curricula were supplied to the GAL program.

## **Technical Assistance and Other Program Support**

### **Training and Technical Assistance**

Program and training staff provide technical assistance to:

1. County social service staff
2. Community-based service providers and contractors

3. Foster care and adoptive families, and other placement providers
4. Adoption agencies that are part of new partnerships.

Department staff provides technical assistance to county social service staff upon request.

The annual update on training and technical assistance provided is in **Attachment A-FFY 2014 APSR Goals and Objectives**.

## **CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION BETWEEN TRIBES AND STATES**

The department continues to carry out ongoing and systemic consultation and coordination with the 11 tribal organizations within the state. The Indian Child Welfare staff provide technical assistance to county social workers on implementation of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), Minnesota Indian Family Preservation Act (MIFPA), Tribal State Agreement, and upon request and/or referral, provides policy and best practice advice on working together for Indian children and families. The Indian Child Welfare Advisory Council, as designated by the commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Human Services, helps formulate policies and procedures relating to Indian child welfare services, and makes recommendations regarding approval of grants. [Minn. Stat. 260.835] [Minn. Stat. 260.785, subds. 1-3] Indian Child Welfare grants, allow the department to fund primary and special focus grants that support family preservation and reunification services to local social service agencies, Indian organizations, tribes and other entities. [Minn. Stat. 260.785]

### **Consultation**

Department staff meet quarterly with the Indian Child Welfare Advisory Council to review issues affecting Indian children and families, and actively work together to address disparities.

The council is represented by all 11 tribes in Minnesota, and includes urban representatives from the Duluth, St. Paul and Minneapolis areas. Names of the tribes and their representatives on the Indian Child Welfare Advisory Council include:

White Earth:	Jeri Jasken
Leech Lake:	Victoria White
Red Lake:	Paula Woods
Fond du Lac:	Lisa Pollak
Grand Portage:	Roger Linehan
Prairie Island:	Pamela Boyd
Upper Sioux:	Tanya Ross
Lower Sioux:	Thomas Williams
Bois Forte:	Angela Wright
Mille Lacs:	Ted Waukey
Shakopee:	Nancy Martin

The Tribal State Agreement requires parties to meet annually to discuss how the department and the tribes can work together to improve outcomes and services for Indian children and families. Minnesota's Tribal/State Agreement was amended in 2007.

According to the 2012 Child Welfare Report, American Indian children are 14 times more likely than a White child to be placed out-of-home and more than six times more likely to be reported as abused or neglected than were White children, respectively.

American Indian children represent 1.8 percent of the general child population; in comparison to children of all races in Minnesota, American Indian children represent 15.5 percent of children in out-of-home placement.

## **Compliance Measures**

Department staff is currently working to expand qualitative measurement of ICWA compliance and best practices through two expanded quality assurance processes:

- In 2012, a supplemental ICWA practice review protocol to the MnCFSR was added and applies to those ICWA cases selected in county reviews. State staff monitors statewide aggregate data and qualitative data gathered through review of ICWA cases as part of the state's quality assurance system (MnCFSR).
- A specialized ICWA case review process is being developed by department staff and tribal representatives. This will expand the number of ICWA cases that are reviewed and the depth ICWA compliance and practice. This process was piloted in fall 2013.

## **ICWA Components**

1. **Notification of Indian parents and tribes of state proceedings involving Indian children and their right to intervene:** The Minnesota Indian Family Preservation Act expands and strengthens the federal Indian Child Welfare Act by requiring notification of, and providing intervention by, tribal social services when an Indian child is at risk of placement, including those cases where Indian children are voluntarily in placement. Specific policies and procedures to comply with these requirements are outlined in the department's ICWA Social Service Manual issued to each county agency. Compliance is further supported by SSIS features that include a social worker checklist and built-in documentation feature that helps counties meet ICWA and MIFPA requirements. The Minnesota Child Welfare Training System provides basic, advanced and specialized training curricula on ICWA, MIFPA, the Tribal/State Agreement, the Social Service Manual and SSIS.
2. **Placement preferences for Indian children:** Requirements to follow special placement preferences for Indian children are clearly defined in numerous citations of Minnesota statutes and rules, and are included in the SSIS feature for ensuring compliance with ICWA and MIFPA. Efforts to maintain compliance with this requirement are carried out through referral to the ICWA staff at the department for

mediation assistance, when appropriate, and procedures outlined in the American Indian Child Welfare Manual, SSIS and MCWTS.

3. **Active efforts to provide services to a family to prevent removal of an Indian child from his or her parent or Indian custodian, or to reunify an Indian child with his or her parent or Indian custodian after removal:** Requirements to provide active efforts to prevent the breakup of the Indian family are clearly defined in numerous citations of Minnesota statutes, and are included in the SSIS feature for ensuring compliance with ICWA and MIFPA. Active efforts findings are required in any Child in Need of Protection or Services (CHIPS) court actions involving an Indian child/family. Qualified expert witnesses, persons designated by each Minnesota tribe, are used in Indian child custody/placement court proceedings. Additional efforts to maintain compliance with this requirement are carried out through referral to the ICWA Compliance Review Team, when appropriate, and procedures outlined in the American Indian Child Welfare Manual, SSIS and MCWTS.
4. **Tribal right to intervene in state proceedings or transfer proceedings to jurisdiction of the tribe:** This ICWA requirement is expressly defined in the Tribal/State Agreement. The agreement clearly describes transferring jurisdiction to tribal social services and tribal courts based on three levels of criteria: mandatory transfers, conditional transfers and transfer procedures. The Social Service Manual provides procedural guidance to counties to carry out these requirements.

## **Section 422 Protections for Indian Children**

1. SSIS has the capacity to gather and report on the status, demographic characteristics, location and goals for the placement of every child who is, or who has been during the previous 12 months, in foster care. Counties gather data and report at the local level; the department prepares annual reports that provide statewide information on this data.
2. Minnesota has a case review system for each child receiving foster care under the supervision of the state.
3. Minnesota has a service array designed to help children, when safe and appropriate, return to families from which they were removed, or placed in a permanent setting. Most of these services are carried out through local county social service agencies.
4. Minnesota has a pre-placement preventive services program designed to help children at risk of foster care placement remain safely with their families. Most of these services are carried out through local county social service agencies.

## **Activities Undertaken to Improve Compliance with ICWA**

Training on the Indian Child Welfare Act is provided by the Minnesota Child Welfare Training System. Courses include: ICWA training, Concurrent Permanency Planning and ICWA, Bridging Our Understanding: American Indian Family Preservation and ICWA Training of

Trainers. Training topics span the history and requirements of the federal Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978, the Minnesota Indian Family Preservation Act of 1985, the Tribal/State Agreement of 2007, and the American Indian Child Welfare Manual. Training includes an overview of legal requirements and cultural competence best practices skill development.

In February 2011, the MCWTS piloted a fully revised social work Foundation curriculum for new county and tribal child welfare and child protection workers via Web-based training (WBT) and classroom training. Various Foundation segments focus specifically on working effectively with American Indian children and families. One WBT module is titled “American Indian Child Welfare Practice.” The four chapters provide culturally relevant context to increase child welfare workers’ understanding of historic influences on today’s American Indian families, and the rationale behind laws and regulations governing work with American Indian children and families. The module introduces workers to the complex legal requirements and a framework of best practices promoted by the department. Narration of the WBT is provided by an American Indian voice. Additionally, trainees move through an interactive scenario that requires them to apply knowledge and best practices. Foundation training is also classroom-based and focuses on skill-building. Concerns that affect American Indian children and families are addressed at multiple points throughout the classroom training, and culminate with workers learning to walk through the life of an American Indian case in policy and practice applications.

The course, “Bridging Our Understanding: American Indian Family Preservation,” collaboratively written by the 11 tribes in Minnesota, is designed to help child welfare professionals understand the cultural perspectives that affect their work with American Indian children and families. The unique teaching approach intends to challenge non-Indian social workers to reconcile practice methods with a relational world view and cultural practices of American Indian tribes in Minnesota. Workers gain knowledge of specific tribal resources that are tribally identified as fundamental to improving service development and delivery to American Indian children and families. Each course is presented by tribally affiliated trainers and representatives from various tribes in Minnesota.

This three-day course scheduled over several months offers child welfare workers a comprehensive experience to gain awareness, understanding and improved practice skills for working with American Indian children and families. Participants are required to complete pre-course assignments prior to attending the first day of class. Participants are also required to complete assignments following the first and second classes. Eighteen training hours are earned upon completion of all assignments and attendance at all three classes in the same series at the same American Indian reservation location. No partial credit hours are given.

This course also addresses the disproportionate representation of American Indian children in the child welfare system.

The “Indian Child Welfare Act Active Efforts Best Practices” guide, issued in 2007, continues to be requested and used by tribes, Indian organizations and the MCWTS. The objective of the practice guide is to provide guidance to county child welfare workers who work with American Indian children and families to build consistency and experience through active efforts practice, as required by federal and state laws. Upon request, department staff will provide training on the

practice guide for county child welfare workers who work with American Indian children and families.

Department staff is charged with providing technical assistance to counties for Indian child welfare activities and other support, as needed, to improve compliance in providing services to American Indian children and families.

## **Consultations Regarding Chafee Foster Care Independence Program**

All 11 federally recognized tribes in Minnesota were sent the department's bulletin regarding Chafee/SELF funding and the ability to request funding. Follow-up correspondence was also sent to each tribe regarding their interest in these services. Of the 11, four tribes have entered into grant contracts for Chafee funds. The department has one community-based grantee specifically for native American youth in the metro area. Another grantee in northern Minnesota works closely with a couple of tribes in the area. No tribe has requested to develop an agreement to administer, supervise, or oversee the Chafee Foster Care and Independence Program or an Education Training and Voucher program with respect to eligible Indian children.

The ETV program provides updates to county and tribal social service agency social workers and supervisors. Department staff is available to meet with tribal social service agency staff at their request.

## **APSR Distribution**

A copy of the APSR will be posted on the department's website. A notice will be sent to tribal leaders when the report is available.

## **FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE PARENT RECRUITMENT**

Minn. Stats., sections 260C.215 and 260C.605, require child-placing agencies to make special efforts to recruit foster and adoptive families from among the relatives of waiting children. Statutes further require child-placing agencies to recruit potential foster and adoptive parents that reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children in the state for whom foster and adoptive families are needed. Department staff expect that local public and private agencies will fulfill the obligation to recruit, train, provide a home study and support services to foster and adoptive families within their jurisdictions.

Minn. Stat., 260C.193, subd. 3, and 260C.212, subd. 2, require first consideration for foster and permanent placement (e.g., adoption or transfer of permanent physical and legal custody) of a child to relatives, including persons with whom a child has resided or had significant contact. Minn. Stat., 260C.221, requires that county agencies complete relative searches to identify, notify and engage relatives, and to consider relatives willing and able to provide safe, stable, nurturing and permanent homes for children.

## Information and Training Provided

“Family Matters: Information for relatives considering becoming foster parents” is a brochure available on the department’s website to provide information for prospective relative foster parents, including procedures for emergency relative foster care placements, background studies and variances, consistent with the Fostering Connections for Success and Increasing Adoptions Act requirements. The department’s website provides information about how to become a licensed foster parent in Minnesota.

The department supports local agencies by providing training opportunities through the Minnesota Child Welfare Training System. Agencies may request training for professional staff in their agencies as well as prospective or current foster, adoptive and kinship families in their communities; the MCWTS will provide trainers and curriculum. In addition, the department supports training for professionals and adoptive/foster/kinship families through the MN ADOPT grant contract. Information about other adoption services funded through MN ADOPT is in other sections of this report.

## Adoption and Foster Care Recruitment Grants

The department funds and manages several grant contracts with county and private agencies to carry out tasks to increase the number of prospective foster and adoptive parents prepared to care for the type of children typically needing foster and adoptive families.

A description of specific goals and objectives, benchmarks and progress in implementing these grants is in **Attachment A-FFY 2014 APSR Goals and Objectives**.

Since 1998, the department has offered state grants to support recruitment of foster and adoptive families. The Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 amended federal laws to require child welfare agencies to increase opportunities for relatives to care for foster children. Therefore, grants offered since 2009 included opportunities to request grant funds to support relative recruitment.

In September 2012, the recruitment grant offered county and American Indian Child Welfare Initiative tribal social service agencies the opportunity to apply for state grants for the purpose of purchasing LexisNexis Accurant technology to recruit relative foster and adoptive families. This grant was renewed in 2013. [DHS policy bulletin #13-68-02] Regional distribution of LexisNexis licenses was offered by awarding 54 grants, making 133 licenses available across the state. Grantees and their regional partners are using the Child Welfare Dashboard, available on the department’s website, to track progress of relative foster care and adoptive placements.

According to the Child Welfare Data Dashboard, the rate of relative foster care has increased as follows:

	<b>Statewide Rate of Relative Foster Care Placement</b>
2008	31%

2009	30%
2010	30%
2011	33%
2012	35%
2013	39%

## Public/Private Adoption Initiative

The Public/Private Adoption Initiative (PPAI) consists of department grant contracts with licensed private adoption agencies responsible to provide adoption services for children under guardianship of the commissioner, or children under tribal guardianship. PPAI services are meant to supplement, rather than replace, existing programs and services provided by county and tribal social service agencies.

A primary function of PPAI grant contracts is to develop a pool of prospective adoptive parents prepared to parent the type of children typically waiting to be adopted in Minnesota by recruiting, training and completing home studies. The PPAI agencies target recruitment efforts to identify families open to adopting children age 6 and older, children of color, and sibling groups who need to be adopted together. Placement support services are also a major component of PPAI contracts. Although the PPAI continues to provide funding for adoptive placements for any age child, the contract priority and funding structure for placement services now provides incentives for adoption of older children. PPAI agencies also provide intensive child-specific recruitment services for children and youth under state or tribal guardianship.

Oversight of PPAI agencies is accomplished through several methods. PPAI staff attend quarterly meetings with department staff. Agencies are required to track, record and submit, on a quarterly basis, case information and case plans that provides the department with outcome data. Site reviews are conducted periodically at all PPAI agencies. Agency record keeping systems are reviewed to ensure fiscal and program compliance, program implementation, strategies and outcome measurements.

PPAI contracts end on June 30, 2014. The department is currently in negotiations with agencies for contracts beginning July 1, 2014.

A description of specific goals and objectives, benchmarks and progress in implementing PPAI is in **Attachment A-FFY 2014 APSR Goals and Objectives**.

## MN ADOPT

The state extended its contract with the Minnesota Adoption Resource Network (MARN) into a fifth year to provide an array of both pre- and post-adoption services. MN ADOPT manages the State Adoption Exchange; develops, maintains and provides adoption-related information; provides appropriate referrals for support and services; and provides training, education and clinical support to adoptive parents and professionals who serve adoptive families.

The most significant recruitment service of MN ADOPT is management of the State Adoption Exchange, a Web-based system to recruit families for children in foster care waiting to be adopted. The exchange's three components are:

1. A secure, password-protected site that generates a list of potential matches of waiting children and families with approved adoption studies based on a set of child criteria.
2. Public adoption Web listings at the state ([www.mnadopt.org](http://www.mnadopt.org)) and national ([www.adoptuskids.org](http://www.adoptuskids.org)) levels on which to post a photo and description of waiting children in order to provide a first glimpse to interested families.
3. A limited-access email list serve for adoption professionals that provides a venue to share non-identifying recruitment information about waiting children. This component is managed by the department.

In addition to administering two of the three components of the exchange, MN ADOPT also coordinates a number of other child-specific recruitment tools to assist placing workers identify appropriate adoptive parents for waiting children:

- “Thursday’s Child” – a weekly television video segment airing on Twin Cities metro area’s KSTP-TV that features a waiting child or sibling group
- Star Tribune – a monthly photo/description featured in the local Minneapolis newspaper that highlights a waiting child or sibling group.

The current MN ADOPT grant contract provides outreach to media and targeted communities to increase public awareness of children in foster care waiting for adoptive families. Outreach efforts are intended to:

- Recruit a diverse pool of potential adoptive parents that reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children in Minnesota for whom adoptive families are needed,
- Recruit potential adoptive parents who are willing to parent the types of children under guardianship of the commissioner typically available for adoption, which include:
  - Children ages 6 and older
  - Children of color
  - Sibling groups that need to be adopted together.

The MN ADOPT HELP program manages post-adoption clinical services for Minnesota families who have adopted children under state guardianship. HELP provides short-term clinical services for families in crisis, connecting them with adoption-competent therapeutic services, and provides funding for critical services that would not otherwise be available to families post-adopt.

A description of the specific goals and objectives, benchmarks and progress in implementing MN ADOPT is in **Attachment A-FFY 2014 APSR Goals and Objectives**.

### **Department Coordination/Participation/Collaboration in Miscellaneous Adoption and Foster Care Recruitment Events/Efforts**

- “A Circus of the Heart” is held annually in November during National Adoption Month to celebrate adoptive families, as well as to recruit prospective adoptive families for children under guardianship of the commissioner waiting in foster care. The event is

featured in print and television news coverage that raises awareness of children in the foster care system waiting for adoptive families. It is a collaboration of the department, MN ADOPT, county social service and PPAI agencies. . The 16<sup>th</sup> annual celebration was held Nov. 3, 2013.

- The Minnesota Heart Gallery, <https://www.minnesotaheartgallery.org/>, is a photographic exhibit featuring engaging portraits of waiting youth. Its mission is to assist individual youth find adoptive parents, but also to raise community awareness of children waiting in foster care for permanent families. The Heart Gallery features Web-based photos, but is also regularly displayed at a number of public and private events. A network of professional photographers donate their time to capture the spirits of these waiting youth.
- National Adoption Day is celebrated each November with special events around Minnesota. The most notable events are hosted by three Twin Cities metro counties and include the adoption finalizations of a number of waiting children, and a variety of speakers and activities that celebrate the building of families through adoption. These events receive print and television news coverage, and raise awareness of the need for adoptive parents for children waiting in foster care.
- Minnesota's waiting youth participate in an annual holiday event with the NBA's Minnesota Timberwolves, sponsored by the team's FastBreak Foundation. Youth are treated to lunch and a shopping spree with participating Timberwolves players. Features and clips from the event are broadcast through the Timberwolves' media as well as local news media. Event planning is a collaboration of department staff, MN ADOPT staff and the Timberwolves.
- The department and collaborating county partners celebrate National Foster Care Month. One event is supported by Minnesota's professional soccer team, the Minnesota United FC. The event is sponsored by The Sanneh Foundation, a not-for-profit corporation to provide positive environments for urban youth to become positive and productive adults, and also supported by the department, and Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey and Scott counties. Another event is with the St. Paul Saints baseball team. The event includes a pre-game ceremony honoring foster families, tickets to the Saints game, free prize drawings, and an opportunity for children to run the bases and get autographs from players after the game.
- The Minnesota Twins continue the tradition of recognizing foster parents by hosting an annual recognition event. The event includes JumboTron messages, a pre-game ceremony, and a foster care information table staffed by the department and county experts.
- Each year in anticipation of National Foster Care Month and National Adoption Month, the department issues press releases and news tips to Minnesota radio and television stations and newspapers to generate news stories and media interviews that highlight the need for foster and adoptive parents for children in care. In 2013, a similar effort was coordinated for African American History month.
- Bus benches, billboards and radio and television commercials are used by Hennepin and Ramsey counties to highlight the need for foster and adoptive families.
- Department staff regularly attends the quarterly ombudsman meetings to inform, and receive feedback from, communities of color about the needs of children in foster care.

## **ADOPTION INCENTIVE PAYMENTS**

Any adoption incentive award funds received by Minnesota are used to support adopted children and their families. The 2013 Minnesota Session Laws, Chapter 108, article 14, section 2, requires that any adoption incentive payments received be appropriated to the commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Human Services for post-adoption support services, including parent support services. The department ensures timely expenditure of the funds through contracts with provider agencies. There have been no problems expending the funds.

An update on the use of adoption incentive payment activities and progress is in **Attachment A-FFY 2014 APSR Goals and Objectives**.

## **CHILD WELFARE WAIVER DEMONSTRATION ACTIVITIES**

On Oct. 1, 2004, the Administration on Children and Families granted authority under section 1130 of the Social Security Act, for Minnesota to operate a child welfare demonstration project. The department began implementation of the permanency demonstration on Nov. 17, 2005, and completed the project Sept. 30, 2010.

The Minnesota Permanency Demonstration Project (MnPD) allowed for expanded eligibility and services within the Title IV-E foster care program to support a continuous benefit set for foster parents who adopted or accepted permanent legal custody of children in their care. The overall goal of the project was to increase willingness of foster parents to adopt or assume permanent legal custody of special needs children already in their care by eliminating the financial barriers to these permanency options.

## **CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT ACT (CAPTA)**

The CAPTA update is coordinated with the Child and Family Services Plan under parts B and E of Title IV of the Social Security Act [42 U.S.C. 620 et seq.] and Title XX, relating to child welfare services and family preservation and support services. Refer to **Attachment A-FFY 2014 APSR Goals and Objectives** for a description of activities that the state has carried out using funds received under the grant, and activities that further CAPTA program areas selected for improvement.

No substantive changes to state law or regulations were made that would affect Minnesota's eligibility for the CAPTA state grant. There were no significant changes from Minnesota's previously approved CAPTA plan in how the state uses funds to support the 14 program areas.

Minnesota's CAPTA coordinator is:

Jamie Sorenson, Acting Director  
Child Safety and Permanency Division

## A. CAPTA Funded Activities

- 1. Citizen Review Panels:** Citizen Review Panels provide opportunities for community members to play an integral role in ensuring the child protection system is protecting children from abuse and neglect, and helping to find permanent homes for them. While the panels are required to review the state's CAPTA plan, they also evaluate different aspects of the child protection system in their communities. Comprising 11 to 16 citizens each, these panels represent a partnership among:

- Citizens
- Community agencies
- County child protection systems
- Minnesota Department of Human Services.

To ensure the state's child protection system is effective, Citizen Review Panels:

- Evaluate how well their county complies with the state's CAPTA plan
- Consult with their county's child protection agency on other important child protection standards in their county
- Prepare and make available to the public an annual report summarizing the panel's activities
- Review consistency of the child protection system's practice and policy compliance
- Offer insight that those working within the system may miss, and provide feedback on what is or isn't working
- Analyze trends and recommend policy changes
- Provide outside validation of the child protection system's successes and staff efforts
- Increase community understanding of, and investment in, the child protection system
- Provide input on the use of community resources
- Promote cooperation among community resources and county child protection services
- Advocate for needed resources to protect children from abuse and neglect, and find them permanent homes quickly.

- 2. Multistate Foster Care Data Archive website** is an online information and decision support system maintained by the Center for State Foster Care Adoption Data, developed by Chapin Hall Center for Children, University of Chicago, and the American Public Human Services Association. The website allows viewers to more effectively use administrative data to manage child welfare programs. It allows states and counties to better understand foster care placement outcomes, establish performance improvement

targets, monitor progress toward those targets, and compare performance with other counties and states.

**3. CAPTA funded staff activities include:**

- Enhancing the general child protection system by developing, improving, and implementing risk and safety assessment tools and protocols
- Assisting counties and tribes in addressing disparities using multidisciplinary, interagency teams
- Supporting and enhancing interagency collaboration among public health, child protection service system, and agencies carrying out private community-based programs to provide child abuse and neglect prevention and treatment services (including linkages with education systems), and
- Use of differential response; and intake, assessment, and investigation of constituent inquiries.

## **B. CAPTA Fatality and Near Fatality Public Disclosure Policy**

There are plans for a legislative proposal to amend Minnesota's statute regarding public disclosure procedures for cases involving a child death, to bring the statute into compliance with federal requirements.

Minnesota collects child fatality information from the Minnesota Department of Health Vital Statistics (death certificates), law enforcement reports, medical examiner/coroner reports and social services reports. Child fatality data is cross checked with maltreatment determination data indicating a severity level of "death" from the Social Service Information System, to ensure that all maltreatment deaths known are documented in the Social Service Information System and reported to NCANDS. [Minn. Stat. 256.01, subd. 12](#), authorizes the department to have access to non-public data under Chapter 13 that is maintained by state agencies, statewide systems or political subdivisions. Access under this section includes police investigative data, autopsy records and coroner/medical examiner investigative data, hospital, public health (includes death certificates), medical records and social services records.

[Minn. Stat. 626.556, subd. 11d](#), authorizes public disclosure of the finding or information about a case of child abuse or neglect which resulted in a child fatality or near fatality, when a person is criminally charged with having caused a child fatality or near fatality, or would have been charged if not for that person's death.

## **STATISTICAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **CAPTA Annual State Data Report Item**

The Child Safety and Permanency Division provides ongoing technical assistance and training for intake assessment, screening, and investigations on reports of child abuse and neglect. Assistance and training is provided to county social service agency and private providers to strengthen their ability to remain in compliance with their legal responsibilities.

## Information on Child Protective Workforce

In Minnesota, the child protection system is administered at the county level. The Merit personnel system is utilized by 73 of the 87 Minnesota counties. The minimum qualifications for each job classification are defined by the Merit system in the class specifications. The class specifications of each of the job classes can be accessed at the link below. Scroll down to “Merit System Manual material,” and below that is the link to the “Merit System class specifications.”

[http://www.dhs.state.mn.us/main/id\\_010621](http://www.dhs.state.mn.us/main/id_010621)

The Merit system class specifications are often used as a general guideline by counties not in the Merit system. The minimum qualifications of education and experience in the Merit system for a child protection social worker include:

- A bachelor's degree from an accredited college/university with a major in social work, psychology, sociology or closely related field, or
- A bachelor's degree from an accredited four-year college or university with a major in any field, and one year of experience as a social worker in a public or private social services agency.

Note: The incumbent must participate in a minimum of 15 hours per year of continuing education or in-service training as outlined in Minn. Stat. 626.559.

New child protection workers are required to attend the Foundation training provided by the Minnesota Child Welfare Training System within six months of being hired.

There are no mandated caseload or workload requirements for child protection social workers or supervisors.

The Merit system minimum qualifications for social services supervisors are:

- An accredited master's degree in Social Work and one year of experience as a social worker; or
- A master's degree from an accredited college/university in clinical psychology, counseling psychology, human services administration, or closely related field, (i.e., applied behavioral sciences) and one year of experience as a social worker; or
- A baccalaureate degree from an accredited college/university and four years of experience as a social worker.

For child protection personnel responsible for intake, screening, assessment, and investigation of child abuse and neglect reports in Minnesota, the following are demographics and data on the education, qualifications and training of staff:

### Age:

20s	30s	40s	50s	60+
15.80%	29.59%	29.85%	18.88%	6.02%

### Gender:

<b>Male</b>	12.72%
<b>Female</b>	87.28%

**Ethnicity:**

<b>American Indian</b>	4%
<b>Asian</b>	1%
<b>Black/African American</b>	4%
<b>White/Caucasian</b>	91%
<b>Hispanic</b>	2%
<b>Other, including Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Hmong, Ethiopian, Korean, Russian, Somali, Vietnamese</b>	Less than 1%

**Degrees:**

<b>AA</b>	<b>BA/BS</b>	<b>BSW</b>	<b>MA</b>	<b>MSW</b>	<b>Ph.D</b>	<b>DSW</b>	<b>Other Mstr</b>
1.07%	40.43%	28.78%	5.35%	19.95%	.13%	0%	2.81%

**Education:**

<b>Social Work</b>	<b>Psychology</b>	<b>Sociology</b>	<b>Human Services</b>	<b>Other Social Services</b>	<b>Other Non-social Services</b>
63.99%	18.21%	6.43%	3.48%	7.36%	5.09%

**Juvenile Justice Transfers**

Minnesota defines this population of children as those who have been discharged from foster care with transfer to another agency as the reason for discharge. Data is derived from AFCARS foster care element 58. In 2013, 150 discharges from foster care were transferred to another agency. This represents 2.53 percent of all transfers in 2013, replacing 2.57 percent of all discharges from foster care in 2012.

**Sources of Data on Child Maltreatment Deaths**

Minnesota's Child Mortality Review Panel is a multidisciplinary group including representatives from state, local and private agencies. Disciplines represented include social work, law enforcement, medical, legal, public health, mental health, forensic medicine and education.

While the primary source of information on child deaths resulting from maltreatment is local child protective services, additional cases are identified through the review of death certificates obtained from the Office of Vital Statistics, and review of law enforcement and coroners/medical examiners reports. The department's Child Mortality Review coordinator reviews death certificates filed with the Minnesota Department of Health to ensure that all child deaths meeting program criteria are reviewed. Minnesota's statute authorizing child mortality reviews enables the department to access non-public data maintained by state agencies, statewide systems and political subdivisions that are related to a child's death or circumstances surrounding a child's care. It also has access to records of hospitals, police investigative data, autopsy records,

coroner/medical examiner investigative data, public health and other medical records of a child. Also accessible are hospital and other medical records of a child's parent that relate to prenatal care, and social service agency records, when services were provided to a family within three years preceding a child's death.

Local agencies are required to review all child deaths resulting from child maltreatment, including those children who were not previously known to the social services agency. These child maltreatment deaths are recorded in the Social Service Information System.

Over the past five years, the Child Mortality Review Panel has reviewed 289 child deaths and near fatal injuries.

Type of case	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	TOTAL
<b>Sudden unexpected infant death</b>	11	24	31	42	29	<b>137</b>
<b>Accident</b>	20	11	0	9	13	<b>53</b>
<b>Suicide</b>	3	5	3	0	2	<b>13</b>
<b>Fatal and near fatal inflicted injury</b>	26	16	12	7	25	<b>86</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>289</b>

Since 2009, there has been an increase in sudden unexpected infant deaths that occurred in licensed family child care homes. In 2012, a thorough study of the deaths was completed and recommendations from the Child Mortality Review Panel were used by the Licensing Division to make changes in policy and training for licensing workers and child care providers. As a result, the number of deaths that occurred in licensed child care has decreased. In 2013, there were three deaths in licensed child care homes.

Minnesota has been collecting data on cases reviewed by the Child Mortality review Panel in the National Center for the Review and Prevention of Child Deaths' Child Death Review Case Reporting System. From the data collected, department staff has learned more about the characteristics of individuals that inflict severe violence on children. Unemployment, mental illness, prior criminal history and chemical abuse are factors that were noted in cases of severe inflicted injury. Aggregate data about the offenders has helped to shape better practice by including all adults residing in a child's home in the child protection assessment, investigation and services.

## Education and Training Vouchers

Name of State: Minnesota

	Total ETVs Awarded	Number of New ETVs
<u>Final Number:</u> <b>2012-2013 School Year</b> (July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013)	220	123
<b>2013-2014 School Year*</b> (July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014)	138	64

## **Inter-country Adoptions**

Three children adopted from other countries entered into state custody as a result of an adoption dissolution. The children were adopted as infants and the agencies that facilitated the adoption are not a part of state records. All three children have special needs and the families determined that they were unable to meet their needs. One child was adopted again and that adoption subsequently dissolved, then the youth aged out of the foster care system without permanency. One child is currently in a foster care placement and there is active permanency recruitment efforts related to this child. The third child has been adopted by a family in Iowa and is receiving an adoption subsidy benefit from Minnesota.

## **ATTACHMENT A-FFY 2014 APSR Goals and Objectives**

**Attachment A-FFY 2014 APSR Goals and Objectives** can be found attached as a separate document.

## **ATTACHMENT B – Citizen Review Panel Annual Report**

### **Attachment A – 2013 Citizen Review Panel Annual Report**

The Citizen Review Panel Annual Report can be found attached as a separate document. The Department Response is not yet available.